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## **Intro**

### **Statement:**

In this essay I will discuss documentation of labour and portraiture of workers in documentary film and photography.

Using two case studies I will analyse some of the issues that may arise when documenting subjects performing physical and/or financially precarious work.

The last chapter will then be dedicated to analysing how these issues and ideas have informed my own work.

## **Body**

### **1st chapter:**

Case study: Brunna Laboissiere's documentary film *Fabiana* (2018) [Fabiana](#)

- introduction: brief overview of the story, critical reception of the film.
- analysis of a chosen scene: use of camera, sound and editing; what is happening in this scene? How is the subject presented? What surrounds them? What is the meaning that I read in this scene?
- implications of portraying a trans woman doing a traditionally cismale job: how are gender and sexuality playing a role in Fabiana's job? And how are they portrayed by the filmmaker?
- Fabiana's work: how is the job of the truck driver seen by Fabiana? How is it seen by Brunna, a sociology university student who decided to film Fabiana on the road? How did the film affect the job? Does the audience now have a romanticized view of truck drivers? Would Brunna have filmed Fabiana if she had a different, more conventional job for a trans woman? Or if she were a cismale truck driver?
- Relation between filmmaker and subject: the filmmaker's presence in the subject's life for an extended period of time; what were the consequences of the filmmaker's presence?

## 2nd chapter:

Case study: Ruus Sies' photography serie *Building the Rotterdam* (2009-2013)  
[building-the-rotterdam](#)

- analysis of a chosen photograph: what is in the frame and how is it framed?
- technique: colour/black and white, digital/analogue.
- historical context: Rotterdam's rapid urban development, gentrification.
- the subjects: portraying builders (comparison with 1930s photos of builders in New York by Lewis W. Hine); ways of portraying masculinity in the 21st century.
- issues of race and class: the builders come from a variety of ethnic groups, they are working to build the largest building in the Netherlands - gentrification and immigrant labour are here central themes. The photographer documents their working days from a privileged position, is there an issue of exoticized physical labour? Is physical labour portrayed fairly or is it romanticised?

## 3rd chapter:

- Who did I choose to portray? Why? And how did I portray them?
- How did I document their work?
- How has the relationship with my subject evolved?
- What other themes and issues were present and how did I address them?

## Bibliography

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